

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 01207 282138Z  
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W  
-----282154 079248 /62

O 281903Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO SECSTATE NIACT IMMEDIATE 763

S E C R E T AMMAN 1207

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PFOR, JO, US  
SUBJECT: KING'S RSACTION TO CONTINUING PRESS ATTACKS

1. THIS EVENING I RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM CROWN PRINCE HUSSAN ASKING ME TO MEET HIM IMMEDIATELY IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.
2. WHEN I ARRIVED HE SAW ME AT ONCE. ALSO PRESENT WERE PRIME MINISTER AND COURT CHIEF SHARAF.
3. CROWN PRINCE EXPLAINED THAT KING (IN LONDON) HAD JUST READ NEWSWEEK FEBRUARY 28 EDITION REPORT ON HIMSELF TO WHICH HE REACTED NEGATIVELY TO PUT IT POLITELY.  
KING HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HASSAN SEVERAL TIMES  
BY TELEPHONE FROM LONDON AND HAD DICTATED PERSONAL MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT STATING THAT NOW WAS CLEARLY NOT A PROPITIOUS TIME FOR TIO TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES. HASSAN HAD GOTTEN KING TO RECONSIDER AND TOLD HIM THAT HE WOULD CALL ME IN TO RELAY KING'S DEEP UNHAPPYNESS WITH CONTINUING US PRESS ATTACKS ON HIM TO YOU AND THE PRESIDENT.

4. HASSAN MADE FOLLOWING POINTS: KING CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 01207 282138Z

HE IS BEING MADE TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF ALL OF THE PERSONAL ATTACKS, DEMEANING TO HIS DIGNITY AND PRIDE; HE THOUGHT THAT THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT AFTER HIS VISIT HERE WOULD HAVE SET THIS TO REST; HE HOPES THE ADMINISTRATION APPRECIATES THE POSITION THIS PUTS HIM IN WITH HIS OWN PEOPLE AND IN THE ARAB WORLD; HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHY, IF ADMINISTRATION IS NOT LEAKING THIS MATERIAL, IT CONTINUES TO BE PUBLISHED AND EMBELLISHED

IN US PRESS. IN SUM, KING DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHY HE APPEARS TO BE THE "POINT" MAN ON THIS ISSUE.

5. I TOLD HASSAN THAT I WOULD OF COURSE COMMUNICATE KING'S CONCERN TO WASHINGTON. THE POSITION WHICH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY CONTINUE TO MAKE CLEAR -- THAT THERE ARE NO ILLEGALITIES OR IMPROPRIETIES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS MATTER AFTER PRESIDENTIAL REVIEW OF THE SITUATION -- IS OUR ONLY PUBLIC POSITION ON THE SUBJECT ASIDE FROM REFUTING FURTHER COMMENT, AND THAT I PERSONALLY BELIEVED THAT SUCH A POSITION WAS EXTREMELY HELPFUL TO HIS MAJESTY. HASSAN KNOWS WE DO NOT CONTROL MUR PRESS.

6. HASSAN SAID HE APPRECIATED WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM AND THAT HE PERSONALLY HOPED THAT THIS WOULD BE THE LAST CHAPTER IN THE STORIES ON HIS BROTHER.

7. COMMENT: OBVIOUSLY THE KING WHO HAS BEEN IN LONDON FOR THE LAST SIX DAYS HAD NOT UNTIL TODAY BEEN MADE AWARE OF LAST WEEK'S NEWSWEEK REPORT AND POSSIBLY OTHERS IN SIMILAR VEIN. IT IS OF COURSE IRONIC THAT KING SHOULD HAVE CHOSEN NEWSWEEK THIS WEEK TO MAKE HIS OWN POSITION CLEAR AND I REMIND HASSAN THAT IT WAS NOT OUR CHOICE. HASSAN ROLLED HIS EYES AND IN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO HIS ARCHENEMY ZAID RIFAI SAID "WE KNOW WHO CHOSE NEWSWEEK". THE STORY HAS BEEN SUPPRESSED IN JORDAN. THE FACT THAT WE HAVE NOT HAD THIS STORY FROM DEPARTMENT HAS NOT HELPED IN OUR EFFORTS TO DO WHAT WE CAN HERE TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 AMMAN 01207 282138Z

8. MY SUGGESTION NOW IS THAT THE PRESIDENT SEND THE KING A MESSAGE REAFFIRMING OUR PUBLIC POSITION, EXPRESSING HIS REGRETS ABOUT THE STORIES AND CONTINUING ATTACKS, MAKE CLEAR THAT WE DID WHAT WE COULD TO DELAY AND DETER (WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF OUR OWN SYSTEM) PUBLICATION AND TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO KING, THAT WE VALUE HIGHLY OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND THAT THE PRESIDENT LOOKS FORWARD TO SEEING THE KING IN APRIL. A LITTLE CAREFUL CARE AND FEEDING NOW WILL GO A LONG WAY AND IS BADLY NEEDED. KING AND HIS ADVISORS ARE JUST A LITTLE BIT STUNG BY THE PUBLIC REPORTS OF LETTERS TO WILLY BRANDT AND OTHERS FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THIS MAY BE CONTRIBUTING TO SOME OF THE PRESENT UNHAPPINESS IN LONDON. THE LETTER SHOULD BE DELIVERED TO KING BY OUR EMBASSY IN LONDON AT A HIGH LEVEL, PREFERABLY AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE. IF YOU THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE ANY VALUE IN DOING SO (AND I BELIEVE THERE MIGHT BE) I COULD BE IN LONDON IN 24 HOURS WITHOUT NOTICE TO DELIVER THE LETTER MYSELF.

9. WE CAN PROVIDE EMBASSY LONDON WITH KING'S ADDRESS AND CONTACT

TELEPHONE NUMBER IN LONDON IF DESIRED.

PICKERING

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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